

April 11, 2005

The Honorable Michael Chrisman
Secretary, The Resources Agency
State of California
1416 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Schwarzenegger Administration Policy, Restoration of California Salmonids

Dear Mr. Chrisman:

This is to request an opportunity to meet with you at an early date to discuss the joint concerns of the Federation of Fly Fishers, California Trout and Trout Unlimited with Schwarzenegger Administration attitudes toward salmonid restoration policies in this state.

Our request is prompted by the November 12, 2004 letter from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and the failure of DFG to act in a timely and responsive manner to our expressions of concern. We are perplexed as to why a California public trust agency would forward a policy document to a federal agency with alternatives not considered and recommendations made using scientifically unsound methods and data. Simply stated, we wish to know whether the positions taken in that letter are those of the Governor and this Administration?

On March 18, 2005 we provided you with correspondence concerning this matter. We have yet to receive a written response from DFG. The dates of events and our efforts to obtain clear understandings are listed below.

1. The November 12 letter from DFG to NOAA Fisheries.
2. A letter dated January 7 sent to DFG Director L. Ryan Broddrick requesting a meeting to discuss questions and our concerns regarding the NOAA Fisheries correspondence.
3. For your information, representatives of our organizations met with Director Broddrick and members of his staff January 25. At that time we were told we would be informed of the DFG position within two to three weeks.
4. Our letter of March 18 was to ask for a prompt response. This has been followed by several telephone calls to the Director's office. At this writing we have received no departmental reply to either the letter or our subsequent contacts.

The Department's letter proposes certain novel theories which it uses to justify its request that anadromous Central Valley steelhead trout be de-listed from their current

“threatened” status under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). We have enclosed an American Fisheries Society (AFS) peer review dated April 5, 2005 which refutes the “scientific” support for the Department’s positions taken on Central Valley steelhead.

Among AFS findings is that “... CDFG’s recommendation to split the Central Valley ESU into two ESU’s and to delist the Sacramento basin ESU is not based on sound science, appropriate analyses and full understanding ...;” and, “Available science and monitoring data, when correctly applied ..., clearly indicate that Central Valley O. Mykiss are at risk of extinction and merit listing under the Endangered Species Act.”

Over the past several months our organizations have been patient and reasonable in presenting our concerns. However, corrective action is needed very soon if California is to rehabilitate its highly prized and justly deserved reputation for excellence in fishery science; and if we are to be reassured that this State continues to support efforts to restore healthy salmonid populations. If, on the other hand, the DFG letter may be read as an expression of Administration policy that, also, needs to be known.

Before moving forward we wish to know whether the failure of the Department of Fish and Game to respond to us is effectively a policy expression of the Schwarzenegger Administration? Your assistance in helping us learn the answer to this question, and whether the State will take prompt and corrective action, will be greatly appreciated. We look forward to an opportunity to meet with you.

Sincerely,

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Acting For:

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California Director
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Brian Stranko
Executive Director
California Trout

Enclosure

cc: L. Ryan Broddrick, Director, Department of Fish and Game
Interested Parties